I SAW A GOD AND A DEMON DO BATTLE...
THEY WERE TRULY... A GOD AND A DEMON!!

THE LEGEND OF ONIKIRIMARU
CHAPTER 10:
THE DEMONIC PURGATORY OF
AMAGUSA SHIROU.
KEI KUSUNOKI

AMAGUSA
SHIROU
TOKISADA:
THE CHRISTIAN
MESSIAH,
OR...?!

TO THE PEASANTS OF SHIMABARA, IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF HELL.
GYAH!
GYAH!

THOSE WHO REFUSE TO PAY THEIR TAXES OR CONVERT SHALL BE FORCED TO DO THE "STRAW DANCE" LIKE THIS!
THE 19TH YEAR OF THE KEICHOU ERA (1614): THE CHRISTIAN DAIMYO ARIMA HARINOBU WAS REPLACED BY MATSUKURA SHIGEMASA, AND THE PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS BEGAN.
OH GOD, SAVE US!
TIED UP IN A BALE OF STRAW AND BURNED ALIVE... HOW AWFUL.

THEIR PAIN IS OVER. THEY'VE GONE TO GOD NOW.
SIZZLE
ブス
ブス
SIZZLE
ブス
SIZZLE
YOU MUSTN'T LOOK!
DAD! MOM!
WAAAHH!
WAAH!

THE FORMER RULER OF SHIMABARA, AS WELL AS HIS RETAINERS AND MOST OF HIS PEOPLE, HAD BEEN BAPTIZED.
THE PEOPLE OF SHIMABARA, UNABLE TO ENDURE THIS NEW, CRUEL TREATMENT, SECRETLY PLOTTED REBELLION.
I CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE OF THIS!
AS A FORMER SAMURAI AND A RETAINER TO THE OLD HOUSE OF ARIMA, THIS TIME I WILL COMPLAIN TO THE SHOGUNATE!
EUROPEAN-STYLE PAINTER YAMADA SAEMON
WE MUST FIND DEUS-SAMA*1
BUT AN INVISIBLE GOD WILL NOT SERVE TO SHOW OUR FAITH.
GOD IS WITH US!

*JESUS CHRIST

RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
WE MUST FIND THE ONE WHO GOD SENT TO US IN HIS LOVE AND PITY...
EXCUSE ME SIRS

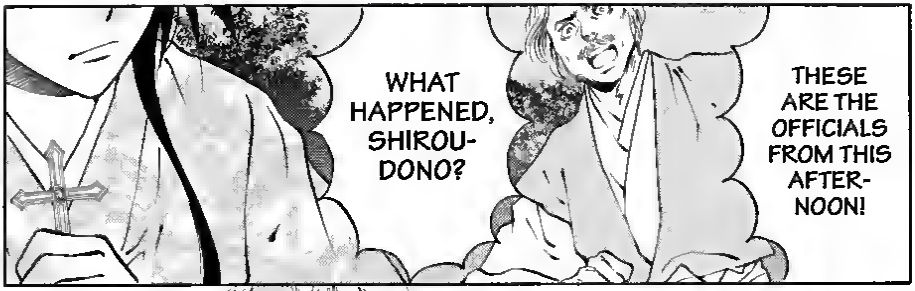
IF YOU'RE GOING INTO THE MOUNTAIN, PLEASE TAKE THIS TALISMAN.
鬼
男鬼
YOU MAY ENCOUNTER A DEMON.
SNATCH
WE'RE FROM THE GOVERNMENT, AND WE'RE HUNTING OOWN OEMONS RIGHT NOW!
THOSE FOUL, DEMONIC CHRISTIANS WHO HIDE THEIR ALTAR IN THE MOUNTAINS! DO NOT GET IN OUR WAY!
HOW BLASPHE-MOUS... FAR MORE THAN THE HIDDEN CHRISTIANS.
CRINKLE
THEY WERE CALLED THIS AS AN INSULT.

AND YET THERE ARE SOME EVILS WHICH ONLY THE GODS OF THIS LAND CAN DESTROY...
OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN, PLEASE GRANT PEACE TO THOSE SOULS WHO HAVE GONE TO JOIN YOU...
GROWL...

W-WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!
WE'VE FOUND YOU, YOU HIDDEN DEMONS–
CLENCH
CLENCH
CLENCH
CLENCH
!!
!!
SWISH!

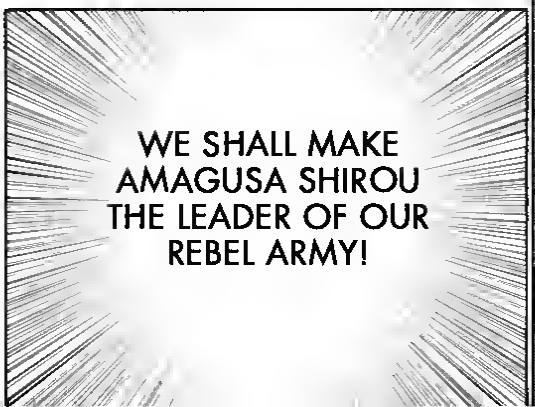
IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND THE SON,
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT...
AMEN.
GYAAH!
WHAT WAS THAT?

ANOTHER UNFAIRLY ADMINISTERED PUNISHMENT?
おお!
SPLURT


WHAT HAPPENED, SHIROU-DONO?
THESE ARE THE OFFICIALS FROM THIS AFTER-NOON!

PERHAPS THIS IS A SIGN FROM HEAVEN...

GOD HAS CHOSEN ME.


WE SHALL MAKE AMAGUSA SHIROU THE LEADER OF OUR REBEL ARMY!

ROOOOAR
おおおおお
GOVERNMENT BUILDING
IT HAS BEEN DECLARED THAT YOUR YEARLY TAXES ARE TO BE RAISED!
WE DEMAND THE RELEASE OF THE CAPTURED CHRISTIANS.
I'LL KILL YOU FIRST AS A LESSON TO THE OTHERS!
CURSE YOU, CHRIS-TIANS!
GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL: HAYASHIZAKI SAEMON

SHIROU-
DONO!
WATCH
OUT!
CLANG

STAB!
A MIRACLE!
THE BLADE BROKE...?
A SIGN FROM GODI
THE 14TH YEAR OF THE KAN'EI ERA (1637): THE SHIMABARA REBELLION BEGAN.
おおおo
おおo
RO
A
R
THE 14TH YEAR OF THE KAN'EI ERA (1637): THE SHIMABARA REBELLION BEGAN.

FIGHT, EVERYONE! FOR I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE!
DO NOT FEAR DEATH!
ROOAR
WHAT DRIVES THEM TO SUCH HEIGHTS OF FURY?
THIS IS NO LONGER A SIMPLE REBELLION.
THIS IS A CIVIL WAR!

THE FLAG OF AMAGUSA SHIRO'S ARMY
PAINTED BY YAMADA SAEMON.
THE REBELLION TOOK THE PROVISIONS, WEAPONS, AND AMMUNITION STOLEN FROM THE PROVINCE'S STOREHOUSES AND TRANSPORTED THEM TO THE ABANDONED HARA CASTLE, WHERE THEY HOLED UP FOR A SIEGE.
THE SHOGUNATE SENT ITAKURA SHIGEMASA TO HELP DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM, BUT HE WAS REPEATEDLY DEFEATED.
NO. MY PEOPLE CALL THIS A HOLY WAR!
CURSE YOU... CURSE YOU, CHRISTIANS!

BLAM!
DID THAT COME FROM INSIDE THE CASTLE?
ONLY A GOD COULD FIRE WITH SUCH ACCURACY...

TRULY THE WORK OF GOD...
SHIROU-SAMA!
SHIROU-SAMA!
SHIROU-SAMA!
IT IS THE SECOND COMING OF DEUS-SAMA*!
*JESUS CHRIST

SHIROU-SAMA, YOUR DINNER...
I NEED IT NOT. YOU HAVE IT, IN MY STEAD.
オオオオオオ
THEY SAY THAT JESUS CHRIST ENDURED 40 DAYS OF FASTING...
SHIROU-SAMA...
FLINCH
THAT MARK... WHAT IS THAT MARK YOU HAVE ON YOUR BODY?

TO KEEP AWAY DEMONS...
OH... MY PARENTS WERE NOT CHRISTIANS, SO WHEN I WAS A CHILD...
...THEY GAVE ME A TATTOO TO KEEP AWAY THE DEMONS.
MY FATHER BELIEVED IN THE EXISTENCE OF ONIKIRIMARU, THE DEMONS' MORTAL ENEMY.
THE HOLY SWORD ONIKIRIMARU, THE ONE THING THAT COULD CUT A DEMON'S FLESH.
IT'S SAID TO BE HELD BY A PURE-BLOODED DEMON, BORN OF A DEMON AND FATED TO SLAY HIS FELLOWS.

ONIKIRI-MARU...
DO NOT WORRY. NOW THIS CRUCIFIX IS THE SYMBOL OF MY FAITH.
I'M SURE THE LORD MUST BE PLEASED BY THAT.
ROOOOOAR
SWISH

AS WE THOUGHT, THEY'VE VERY LITTLE LEFT TO EAT.
RIGHT! WE SHALL STEAL THE RICE AND RETURN!
MOCHIZUKI YOZAEMON
IT IS SAID THAT THE NEW GENERAL SENT BY THE SHOGUNATE, MATSUDAIRA NOBUTSUNE, SENT IN A SQUAD OF KAGA NINJAS TO INVESTIGATE THE REBELLION INSTEAD OF ATTEMPTING TO FORCE THE CASTLE.
WHAT?
SIR, WE'RE MISSING SOMEONE.

YAMADA-SAMA, ANOTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SHOGU-NATE.
ANOTHER LETTER URGING OUR SURRENDER, I'M SURE.
IT'S TRUE THAT OUR SUPPLIES WON'T HOLD OUT MUCH LONGER...
DON'T WORRY, YAMADA-SAMA.
OUR STORES ARE LASTING LONGER THAN PLANNED. IT MUST BE ONE OF SHIROU-SAMA'S MIRACLES!
JESUS CHRIST IS SAID TO HAVE MIRACULOUSLY FED FIVE THOUSAND PEOPLE...

BUT FOR SOME REASON, THERE SEEM TO BE FEWER WOMEN AND CHILDREN AROUND... OR AM I IMAGINING IT?
WITH PLEASURE, SHIROU-SAMA.
SHIROU-SAMA?

GOBBLE
CRUNCH
NO, IT WAS THE ACT OF A DEMON!
SHIROU-SAMA DOESN'T NEED TO EAT BECAUSE HE'S BEEN DEVOURING THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN!
WHAT WAS THAT?
WAS THAT... WAS THAT, TOO, THE WORK OF GOD?

PWISSH
ひゅ!
AMAGUSA SHIROU MUST BE SLAIN!
HE IS NO GOD!
HE IS NO GOD AT ALL!
WHAT MESSAGE DID YOU SEND TO THE SHO-GUNATE?
YAMADA-DONO...

じゅう!
SIZZLE
!
IS IT BECAUSE OF MY TATTOO THAT DRIVES AWAY DEMONS THAT YOU CANNOT TOUCH ME?
じゅうう
SIZZLE
ARE YOU A DEMON, THEN? HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EATING HUMANS?
MY TATTOO!
鬼
HAD HE STARTED ALREADY BACK THEN...?

CHRISTIANITY IS A SPLENDID RELIGION. IT HAS NO EFFECT ON US DEMONS WHATSOEVER.
THIS MAN HAD A CRUCIFIX, NOT A TALISMAN, SO WHEN I DEVOURED HIM I DECIDED TO TAKE HIS PLACE!
EVERYONE OFFERS UP THEIR LIVES TO ME WITH PLEASURE!
TO ME, THIS PLACE IS A DELICIOUS BUFFET!
HA HA HA HA HA

I SEE.
NO WONDER I FELT NO FEAR HERE AT ALL.
AN ASSASSIN SENT BY THE SHOGU-NATE?
I WAS BEGINNING TO MISS EATING PEOPLE WITH FLESH ON THEIR BONES...
AMAGUSA SHIROU... NO, *DEMON*... PREPARE TO DIE.

DO YOU THINK THAT DULL BLADE OF YOURS CAN CUT-
SLICE
GYAH!

A BLADE THAT CUTS THE FLESH OF DEMONS! COULD HE BE...?
MY ARM!
W-WHO ARE YOU?
A DEMON AMONGST DEMONS, WHO CUTS THE FLESH OF DEMONS.
THE MORTAL ENEMY OF DEMONS – A PURE-BLOODED DEMON WHO WIELDS ONIKIRIMARU!
GRAB
GET BACK.

HE WAS ABLE TO TOUCH ME!
YOU ARE NO DEMON, ARE YOU?
ARE YOU GOD? OR ONE OF THE BUDDHAS OR SHINTO DEITIES WHO PURGE THE EVIL OF THIS LAND?
NO, I AM A DEMON, WHO HAS COME TO SLAY THE DEMON WHO HIDES AMIDST THE FAITHFUL!
DAMN YOU!
DAMN YOU! DAMN YOU!
KRICK
KRACK

SLICE!!
UWAH!

SHIROU-SAMA!
AAHH...
SIZZLE
AH....
SHIROU-SAMA...?

FIGHT OR DIE. WHICHEVER YOU PREFER. I ONLY CAME TO SLAY THE DEMON.
WAIT! WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
HE DISAP-PEARED...
IS SHIROU-SAMA GONE?
LET'S SURRENDER... GOD IS NO LONGER WITH US.

WE WILL HAVE SOME-ONE TAKE HIS PLACE UNTIL THEN!
NO! SHIROU-SAMA IS SURE TO REVIVE!
WAKE UP! THAT WAS A DEMON!
I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU ALL DIE!
YOU'RE GOING TO BE WIPED OUT AT THIS RATE!
SURREN-DER!
YOU BLASPHEME AGAINST SHIROU-SAMA? TAKE THIS TRAITOR TO THE DUNGEON!

THE 15TH YEAR OF THE KAN'EI ERA (1638): THE FOUR-MONTH-LONG SHIMABARA REBELLION WAS PUT DOWN, AND THE REBELS SLAIN TO THE LAST MAN.
YAMADA SAEMON WAS SPARED, BECAUSE OF HIS ROLE IN HELPING THE SHOGUNATE. HE WAS THE ONLY RECORDED SURVIVOR.
IRONICALLY, HE WOULD LEAVE HIS NAME IN JAPANESE HISTORY AS A TRAITOROUS JUDAS.
THE ONE WHO SLEW HIM WAS THE GOD OF THIS LAND!
THAT WAS NOT OUR GOD! THAT WAS A DEMON!
THERE IS NO LONGER ANY WAY TO TELL WHETHER AMAGUSA SHIROU WAS THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST...